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## State Overview

### UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT INCREASES

Effective July 1, the maximum weekly benefit for individuals filing new Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims will increase to \$315, a 6.3 percent increase over the current maximum benefit of \$296.

Idaho law sets the maximum weekly benefit amount at 60 percent of the average weekly wage for the preceding calendar year (2000), rounded to the next lower full dollar amount.

- » Average Covered Employment was 550,075, up from 529,384 in 1999.
- » Total Covered Wages were \$15,054,662,567, up from \$13,618,454,468 in 1999.
- » The Average Annual Wage was \$27,368.00, up from \$25,725.10 in 1999.
- » The Average Weekly Wage was \$526.31, up from \$494.71 in 1999.
- » Sixty percent of the Average Weekly Wage was \$315.78, up from \$296.83 in 1999.

### IDAHO UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECREASED TO 4.8 PERCENT

Labor force details for the state, labor market areas, counties, and cities can be found in State Table 1 on page 3.

The total number of individuals actively searching for work in Idaho decreased slightly as the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment dropped to 4.8 percent in May. This is the second lowest unemployment rate this year. However, January through March had the lowest unemployment rate at 4.5 percent. The *Civilian Labor Force* increased during the month by 400 (0.1 percent) to 680,000, reflecting the decrease in the number of jobless and an increase in the number of workers. The number of employed workers rose by 1,000 (0.2 percent) to 647,200, while unemployment dropped by 600 (-1.8 percent). The decrease in the Idaho's unemployment rate resulted from a continuing increase in the number of new jobs in the state.

Unadjusted employment since 1991 has experienced significant growth between April and May. That growth occurred again this year, as there were 10,800 new jobs created. Since 1991, the April to May growth has averaged 11,500 new jobs. The largest number of new jobs created for that time period was 14,400 in 1993. Since 1991, this year, 1999, and 1995 are the only ones years with job growth of less than 11,000 between April and May. The April to May growth in 1999 had the fewest new jobs created during this time period with 8,200. Both this year and 1995 reported an increase of 10,800 new jobs.

The purpose of seasonally adjusting data is to provide an economic trend. A historic series of unadjusted employment data is used to calculate what portion of the employment growth is due to the addition of new jobs every year because of seasonal factors. These factors include an increase in activity in a variety of industries that normally experience a growth in employment levels (i.e., tourism, agriculture, construction, etc.). Since the average growth of near 11,500 new jobs did not occur between April and May this year, the seasonal factor reduced employment growth slightly. In other words, because the 10,800 new jobs were fewer than expected, the seasonally adjusted employment level did not reflect a significant growth in the creation of new jobs. The data indicates a slowing in the growth rate. The slow-

down could be related to weather, the start or completion of a major project or business, the economy, or a variety of other reasons. What we know is that in May 2001 the number of new jobs did not keep pace with prior years.

## AREA LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

Unemployment rates are calculated each month for eight Labor Market Areas (LMAs) in Idaho. The Idaho-Lewis LMA had the highest unemployment rate in May at 9.4 percent, seasonally adjusted. This area typically has the highest unemployment rate for a labor market area as the workforce is primarily engaged in *Lumber & Wood Products*, *Retail Trade*, and *Government Administration* (which includes *Federal Government*). These three industries account for more than 50 percent of the nonfarm employment. This area remains highly dependent on natural resource industries where the *Lumber & Wood Products* industry provides about 12 percent of the area's nonfarm jobs.

The Bonneville LMA reported the lowest unemployment rate in May at 3.3 percent seasonally adjusted, edging out the Boise MSA for the second consecutive month. The *Services* industrial sector accounts for 1 in 3 jobs in the Bonneville LMA's nonfarm employment. Contactors at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory's (INEEL) are major employers in this area as well as the *Services* sector. Other major industrial sectors include *Retail Trade* (18 percent) and *Government* (17 percent).

## COUNTY LABOR FORCE

Of the 44 counties in the state, four experienced double-digit seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in May.

- » Clearwater County at 14.0 percent, down from 14.1 percent in April.
- » Shoshone County at 13.6 percent, up from 13.3 percent in April.
- » Adams County at 13.3 percent, down from 14.1 percent in April.
- » Benewah County at 10.8 percent, down from 11.6 percent in April.

Three counties reported a seasonally adjusted unemployment rate below 3.0 percent in May.

- » Madison County at 1.7 percent, down from 2.0 percent in April.
- » Teton County at 1.9 percent, down from 2.2 percent in April.
- » Blaine County at 2.7 percent, up from 2.5 percent in April.

Eleven other counties reported unemployment rates 4.0 percent or below—Bonneville, Gooding, Jefferson, Ada, Butte, Latah, Oneida, Franklin, Bannock, Jerome, and Bingham.

## CITY LABOR FORCE

Unemployment rates are calculated for seven cities in Idaho. Coeur d'Alene experienced the highest rate in May at 6.3 percent, down two-tenths from April. The lowest rate was in Idaho Falls at 3.2 percent, down from 3.4 percent in April.

## AGRICULTURE

Agriculture employment in Idaho increased 6.4 percent, at 36,510, from April. This reflects an 8.7 percent gain in Hired Workers, and an 8.9 percent gain in Unpaid Family. The number of Hired Workers is 9.8 percent lower than May 2000. The number of Unpaid Family was also down, 6.2 percent, from last year. The number of agricultural workers normally increases throughout the spring until it peaks in July. However, the drought conditions have reduced the need for hired workers, especially irrigators, thus the decrease from one year ago. Shepherders, ranch hands, dairy workers, and landscape laborers are needed. Current information on agricultural activity is available in the Idaho Farm Update at <http://www.labor.state.id.us/lmi/pubs/farmlabor.pdf>.

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DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

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The number of counties that have been declared drought emergency areas has grown to 26 plus the Salmon Tract in Twin Falls County. The following counties are listed in order of their declaration date from the earliest designation on April 19 to the most recent on June 28: Lincoln, Butte, Blaine, Elmore, Canyon, Bonneville, Bingham, Clark, Salmon Tract in Twin Falls County, Ada, Power, Fremont, Jefferson, Custer, Caribou, Oneida, Gooding, Boise, Madison, Teton, Bannock, Owyhee, Cassia, Lemhi, Bear Lake, Payette, and Adams. The designation is effective through December 31, 2001. These declarations allow water users to work with the Department of Water Resources to temporarily reallocate water rights and secure temporary water rights to make it through the summer. If you would like to review the state's drought plan, it is located on the Idaho Department of Water Resources' website: <http://www.idwr.state.id.us/info/pio/issues/Drought%20Plan%202001.pdf>.

A June frost did significant damage to the crops in eastern Idaho. The first crop of alfalfa had to be cut before it matured, in hopes that they could get a good second crop. Once alfalfa is frost damaged, it does not continue to grow. Frost damage to wheat was also fairly widespread. The frost occurred late enough in the growing season that the damage was substantial, but too late to replant. There was frost damage to some potatoes and sugarbeets—but not as widespread as alfalfa and wheat.

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* continued to grow in May as the number of jobs reached a record high for the month of May, 568,600. The number of new jobs created in May was 6,900 more for both April 2001 and May 2000. Between April and May, *Service-Producing Industries* experienced an increase of 4,500 new jobs and *Goods-Producing Industries* gained 2,400 jobs. (For more information, see State Table 2 on page 5.)

### Mining

*Mining* employment remained unchanged at 2,400 in May. The loss of 300 jobs from May 2000 in *Metal Mining* reflects closure of several mines including Bear Track and Sunshine.

### Construction

*Construction* accounted for the majority of the growth in the *Goods-Producing Industries* as 1,700 new jobs in May brought employment to 35,800. The number of jobs since May 2000, however, decreased by 400. The year-over-year numbers indicate that the residential and nonresidential construction is slowing. The number of jobs created varied between the three *Construction* sectors. *Special Trade Contractors* experienced the largest month-to-month gain (1,000 new jobs) and the largest loss in the year-over-year comparison (600 lost jobs). *Heavy Construction* followed next with the addition of 400 new jobs from April and 200 new jobs from May 2000. *Building Construction* had 300 new jobs from April 2001, but has lost 100 jobs from one year ago.

### Manufacturing

The number of jobs in *Manufacturing* increased by 700 to 75,100 in May. Job growth in May occurred in *Logging*,

State Table 1: May 2001 Labor Force (preliminary)

Seasonally Adjusted	Labor Force	Unemp.	% Unemp.	Total Emp.
<b>Seaport LMA</b>	34,980	1,530	4.4	33,450
Nez Perce County	23,320	1,020	4.4	22,300
Asotin County, WA	11,670	510	4.4	11,160
<b>Boise City MSA</b>	250,580	9,660	3.9	240,920
Ada County	181,070	6,020	3.3	175,050
Canyon County	69,510	3,640	5.2	65,870
<b>Pocatello City MSA*</b>	40,680	1,570	3.9	39,110
<b>Bonneville LMA</b>	82,790	2,770	3.3	80,020
Bingham County	22,550	890	3.9	21,660
Bonneville County	48,030	1,480	3.1	46,550
Butte County	1,650	55	3.4	1,595
Jefferson County	10,570	350	3.3	10,220
<b>Cassia-Minidoka LMA</b>	18,470	910	4.9	17,560
Cassia County	9,155	415	4.5	8,740
Minidoka County	9,310	490	5.3	8,820
<b>Idaho-Lewis LMA</b>	7,870	740	9.4	7,130
Idaho County	6,300	620	9.8	5,680
Lewis County	1,580	120	7.7	1,460
<b>Panhandle LMA</b>	90,550	8,210	9.1	82,340
Benewah County	4,440	480	10.8	3,960
Bonner County	17,750	1,690	9.5	16,060
Boundary County	4,550	410	9.0	4,140
Kootenai County	56,940	4,690	8.2	52,250
Shoshone County	6,860	930	13.6	5,930
<b>Magic Valley LMA</b>	48,130	1,905	4.0	46,225
Gooding County	6,675	215	3.2	6,460
Jerome County	9,010	350	3.9	8,660
Twin Falls County	32,450	1,340	4.1	31,110
Adams County	1,600	215	13.3	1,385
Bear Lake County	2,720	110	4.1	2,610
Blaine County	11,910	320	2.7	11,590
Boise County	2,535	125	4.9	2,410
Camas County	390	20	4.6	370
Caribou County	3,030	170	5.6	2,860
Clark County	575	25	4.2	550
Clearwater County	3,980	560	14.0	3,420
Custer County	2,205	145	6.5	2,060
Elmore County	9,290	560	6.0	8,730
Franklin County	4,840	185	3.8	4,655
Fremont County	4,630	280	6.0	4,350
Gem County	6,475	395	6.1	6,080
Latah County	14,590	510	3.5	14,080
Lemhi County	3,555	265	7.5	3,290
Lincoln County	1,810	80	4.3	1,730
Madison County	11,520	195	1.7	11,325
Oneida County	1,810	65	3.7	1,745
Owyhee County	4,105	195	4.8	3,910
Payette County	10,230	680	6.6	9,550
Power County	3,460	235	6.8	3,225
Teton County	3,445	65	1.9	3,380
Valley County	4,280	310	7.2	3,970
Washington County	4,660	360	7.7	4,300
<b>State of Idaho</b>	<b>680,000</b>	<b>32,830</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>647,170</b>
<b>Idaho Cities</b>				
Boise	114,700	3,760	3.3	110,940
Coeur d'Alene	20,070	1,260	6.3	18,810
Idaho Falls	29,630	950	3.2	28,680
Lewiston	19,880	770	3.9	19,110
Nampa	21,270	1,200	5.6	20,070
Pocatello	29,110	1,080	3.7	28,030
Twin Falls	16,930	720	4.3	16,210

\* Pocatello MSA includes all of Bannock County.

*Other Lumber & Wood Products, Food Processing, and Other Durable and Nondurable Goods.* The only job loss (100 jobs) occurred in *Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment*, where additional layoffs occurred in May. The increase in the number of jobs in the *Logging* sector brought the employment level to 1,600 in May as the activity in forests and demand for logs increased. However, the *Lumber & Woods Products* sector is still experiencing economic difficulties as indicated by 1,800 fewer jobs in May compared to one year ago. All sectors in the lumber industry are feeling the economic impact. The number of jobs will continue to decline in June as nearly 375 workers lost their jobs when the Boise Cascade sawmills in Cascade and Emmett ceased operating on May 31.

The number of jobs in the *Electronic & Other Electrical Equipment and Components except Computer Equipment* was unchanged in May at 15,600. This sector provided the only bright spot in an otherwise dismal *Manufacturing* industrial sector. The year over year growth of 1,700 jobs is not to say that all businesses within this sector experienced job expansion as MCMS and ZiLog have experienced layoffs this year. What once was the fastest growing industrial sector has slowed dramatically with the onset of tough economic times in the computer industry. However, the "electronics industry" still accounts for one-third of the jobs in *Manufacturing*.

The number of jobs in the *Manufacturing Nondurable Goods* increased 300 with the growth primarily in *Food Processing* (200) at 28,700 in May. Within *Food Processing*, there was an increase of 100 jobs in *Canned, Frozen, & Preserved Fruits, Vegetables, & Food Specialists*, while the other 100 new jobs were distributed in the other sectors. The year-over-year job loss was due to 500 fewer jobs in *Canned, Frozen, & Preserved Fruits, Vegetables, & Food Specialists* sector. A general seasonal slowdown occurred as the processing plants completed most of work on the 2000 crop.

### **Transportation, Communication, & Utilities**

The addition of 400 new jobs from May 2000 is the most noteworthy event in the *Transportation, Communication, & Utilities* sector. The growth in this sector is related to the expansion and development of call centers for telephone companies around the state.

### **Retail Trade**

*Retail Trade* added 1,800 jobs in May bringing the number of jobs to 110,300. The only loss, which was less than 50 jobs, occurred in *Home Furniture, Furnishings, & Equipment Stores*. The *Eating & Drinking Places* sector experienced the largest increase in jobs with 1,100. The number of jobs in this sector traditionally increases as the tourist season activity begins in earnest.

The addition of 2,900 jobs in *Retail Trade* since May 2000 is primarily due to 1,800 new jobs in *General Merchandise Stores*, which reflects the expansion of Wal-Mart and Fred Meyer across the state. The 1,200 new jobs in *Eating & Drinking Places* was a result of national chains that are taking advantage of Idaho's growth in population and economic stability in 2000.

### **Services**

*Services*, at 147,700, accounted for 26 percent of May's nonfarm jobs. This industrial sector experienced an increase of 1,200 jobs from April. Only two sectors reported a monthly job loss—*Personal Services* (300) and *Education* (1,200). The loss in *Education* was a result of BYU-Idaho (Ricks College) completing their spring semester in late April, which resulted in the loss of 1,000 student jobs. The job losses were offset by gains in *Hotel & Other Lodging Places* (300), *Health Services* (300), *Agriculture Services* (500), and *Business Services* (1,200). The lodging sector was gearing up for conventions, meetings, and other business activities as part of the spring and summer season. Field preparation resulted in more jobs in the agriculture sector. *Personnel Supply Agencies*, a subcategory of *Business Services*, added 800 jobs in May as companies began to hire summer temporary workers. After a brief slowdown because of the reduction in the number of jobs at electronics firms that have been supplied by personnel agencies, activity is rebounding in other areas.

Over the past 12 months the 6,400 new jobs in *Services* have been across all major sectors. *Business Services* added 1,600 new jobs—600 employment agencies and 700 in call centers. *Health Services* added 2,200 new jobs—900 in hospitals and 600 in miscellaneous health services. Three other sections reported at least 600 new jobs—*Educational Services*, *Social Services*, and *Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, & Related Services*.

### **Government**

The increase in the number of jobs in *Government* was primarily in *Federal Government* and *Local Government*. The *Federal Government* added 400 new jobs as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management began hiring for the summer recreation and fire season. The 300 new jobs in *Local Government Administration* occurred as cities and counties continued to hire to meet the demands for summer recreation and maintenance activities. Jobs in this area will continue to grow until July, when it peaks.

The 4,500 year-over-year job loss in *Federal Government* occurred because thousands of temporary workers were employed last year in May to follow-up on the 2000 Census.

### **Outlook**

The number of new nonfarm jobs continued to expand in May and remains positive for most industrial sectors for the remainder of 2001. However, the annual rate of growth has slowed to 1.2 percent compared to 4.3 percent between May 1999 and May 2000. The important fact is that Idaho's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* continue to grow in 2001, but at a much reduced rate.

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State Table 2: Nonfarm Payroll Jobs

BY PLACE OF WORK	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	568,600	561,700	561,700	1.2	1.2
<b>GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	113,300	110,900	115,400	2.2	-1.8
<b>Mining</b>	2,400	2,400	2,500	0.0	-4.0
Metal Mining	1,000	1,000	1,300	0.0	-23.1
<b>Construction</b>	35,800	34,100	36,200	5.0	-1.1
<b>Manufacturing</b>	75,100	74,400	76,700	0.9	-2.1
Durable Goods	46,400	46,000	47,600	0.9	-2.5
Lumber & Wood Products	10,700	10,300	12,500	3.9	-14.4
Logging	1,600	1,300	1,800	23.1	-11.1
Sawmills & Planing Mills	4,300	4,300	4,900	0.0	-12.2
Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes	1,000	1,000	1,400	0.0	-28.6
Other Lumber & Wood Products	3,800	3,700	4,400	2.7	-13.6
Stone, Clay, Glass & Concrete Products	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.0	0.0
Fabricated Metal Products, exc. Machinery & Transportation Equip.	3,000	3,000	3,000	0.0	0.0
Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment	9,600	9,700	10,400	-1.0	-7.7
Electronic & Other Electrical Equip. & Components, Exc., Computer	15,600	15,600	13,900	0.0	12.2
Transportation Equipment	2,300	2,300	2,600	0.0	-11.5
Other Durable Goods	3,700	3,600	3,700	2.8	0.0
Nondurable Goods	28,700	28,400	29,100	1.1	-1.4
Food Processing	16,800	16,600	17,000	1.2	-1.2
Canned, Frozen, & Preserved Fruits, Vegetables & Food Specialties	9,300	9,200	9,800	1.1	-5.1
Paper Products	2,100	2,100	2,200	0.0	-4.5
Printing, Publishing & Allied Products	5,500	5,500	5,400	0.0	1.9
Chemicals & Allied Products	2,300	2,300	2,300	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	2,000	1,900	2,200	5.3	-9.1
<b>SERVICE-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	455,300	450,800	446,300	1.0	2.0
<b>Transportation, Communications, &amp; Utilities</b>	28,100	27,800	27,700	1.1	1.4
Transportation	17,200	17,000	17,100	1.2	0.6
Railroad	1,400	1,400	1,500	0.0	-6.7
Motor Freight Transportation & Warehousing	9,900	9,700	10,000	2.1	-1.0
Communications	7,000	6,900	6,600	1.4	6.1
Electric, Gas, & Sanitary Services	3,900	3,900	4,000	0.0	-2.5
<b>Trade</b>	143,800	141,900	140,300	1.3	2.5
Wholesale Trade	33,500	33,400	32,900	0.3	1.8
Durable Goods	15,800	15,600	15,400	1.3	2.6
Nondurable Goods	17,700	17,800	17,500	-0.6	1.1
Retail Trade	110,300	108,500	107,400	1.7	2.7
Building Materials, Hardware, Garden Supply & Manuf. Home Dealers	6,700	6,500	7,100	3.1	-5.6
General Merchandise Stores	13,400	13,300	11,600	0.8	15.5
Food Stores	20,000	19,800	19,500	1.0	2.6
Automotive Dealers & Gasoline Service Stations	12,000	11,900	12,200	0.8	-1.6
Eating & Drinking Places	38,900	37,800	37,700	2.9	3.2
<b>Finance, Insurance &amp; Real Estate</b>	23,600	23,500	23,500	0.4	0.4
Banking	7,300	7,200	7,300	1.4	0.0
<b>Services</b>	147,700	146,500	141,300	0.8	4.5
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	8,100	7,800	8,000	3.8	1.3
Personal Services	4,400	4,700	4,300	-6.4	2.3
Business Services	30,000	28,800	28,400	4.2	5.6
Amusement and Recreation Services	7,100	7,000	6,900	1.4	2.9
Health Services	37,600	37,300	35,400	0.8	6.2
Hospitals	12,400	12,300	11,500	0.8	7.8
Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, & Related Services	18,300	18,300	17,400	0.0	5.2
<b>Government</b>	112,100	111,100	113,500	0.9	-1.2
Federal Government	13,000	12,600	17,500	3.2	-25.7
State & Local Government	99,100	98,500	96,000	0.6	3.2
State Government	29,400	29,300	28,600	0.3	2.8
Education	14,500	14,500	13,600	0.0	6.6
Administration	14,900	14,800	15,000	0.7	-0.7
Local Government	69,700	69,200	67,400	0.7	3.4
Education	40,300	40,100	38,600	0.5	4.4
Administration	29,400	29,100	28,800	1.0	2.1

\* Preliminary Estimate

\*\* Estimates include all full or part time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay in the following industry groups during the pay period ending nearest the 12th of the month.

DATA PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

MATERIAL IN THIS DOCUMENT IS PUBLIC DOMAIN AND MAY BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR. HOWEVER, THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SHOULD BE CITED AS THE SOURCE.

State Table 3: Economic Indicators

	May 2001	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE <sup>(1)</sup>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	680,000	679,600	655,400	0.1	3.8
Unemployment	32,800	33,400	31,700	-1.8	3.5
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	4.8	4.9	4.8		
Total Employment	647,200	646,200	623,700	0.2	3.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	680,300	673,200	655,700	1.1	3.8
Unemployment	31,200	34,900	30,100	-10.6	3.7
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	5.2	4.6		
Total Employment	649,100	638,300	625,600	1.7	3.8
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE <sup>(2)</sup>					
	4.4	4.5	4.1		
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX <sup>(2)</sup>					
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	174.4	173.5	168.2	0.5	3.7
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	177.7	176.9	171.5	0.5	3.6
AGRICULTURE					
Agriculture Employment	36,510	34,300	39,490	6.4	-7.5
Operators	9,010	9,010	9,010	0.0	0.0
Unpaid Family	610	560	650	8.9	-6.2
Hired Workers	26,890	24,730	29,820	8.7	-9.8
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
<b>Claims Activities</b>					
Initial Claims <sup>(3)</sup>	8,460	8,600	6,666	-1.6	26.9
Weeks Claimed <sup>(4)</sup>	59,029	80,249	51,340	-26.4	15.0
<b>Benefit Payment Activities<sup>(5)</sup></b>					
Weeks Compensated	59,846	57,986	43,136	3.2	38.7
Total Benefit \$ Paid	12,617,804	12,298,759	8,488,367	2.6	48.6
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$210.84	\$212.10	\$196.78	-0.6	7.1
Covered Employers	39,980	39,854	38,397	0.3	4.1
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months <sup>(4)</sup>	\$120,704,930	\$116,575,492	\$104,905,594	3.5	15.1

(1) Preliminary Estimate

(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

(3) Includes all entitlements/programs on Intrastate and Interstate Agent, New, and Additional Claims

(4) Includes all entitlements/programs, Intrastate and Interstate Agent

(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, Total Liabile Activities

**HOURS AND EARNINGS**

	Average Weekly Earnings*			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	May 2001	Apr 2001	May 2000	May 2001	Apr 2001	May 2000	May 2001	Apr 2001	May 2000
Mining	\$613.48	\$598.30	\$598.23	39.1	37.7	41.4	\$15.69	\$15.87	\$14.45
Construction	\$667.67	\$596.57	\$565.47	40.1	37.1	36.6	\$16.65	\$16.08	\$15.45
Total Manufacturing	\$567.76	\$574.56	\$533.89	37.7	37.9	38.8	\$15.06	\$15.16	\$13.76
Lumber & Wood Products	\$523.66	\$506.94	\$491.44	36.8	35.5	37.4	\$14.23	\$14.28	\$13.14
Food & Kindred Products	\$469.65	\$448.36	\$445.43	39.7	37.9	39.7	\$11.83	\$11.83	\$11.22
Communications	\$701.20	\$755.36	\$687.65	40.0	42.7	41.3	\$17.53	\$17.69	\$16.65
Electric, Gas, & Sanitary Services	\$845.54	\$882.34	\$903.64	39.2	40.4	41.7	\$21.57	\$21.84	\$21.67
Trade	\$324.30	\$332.79	\$308.29	30.0	29.9	29.7	\$10.81	\$11.13	\$10.38
Wholesale Trade	\$510.54	\$518.74	\$509.40	38.1	37.0	36.7	\$13.40	\$14.02	\$13.88
Retail Trade	\$271.74	\$281.96	\$250.96	27.7	28.0	27.7	\$9.81	\$10.07	\$9.06

DATA PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

\* These average earnings are computed on a gross basis and reflect changes in premium pay for overtime and late shift work as well as changes in basic hourly and incentive wage.



# PANHANDLE

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI, & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

The Panhandle's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged down from 9.2 percent in April to 9.1 percent in May. April's weather had been exceptionally cool and rainy, while May's weather was closer to normal. The change in the weather allowed construction and other outdoor work to pick up, easing unemployment slightly.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in May 2001 totaled 66,720, almost exactly the same level as in May 2000. May was the first month since March 1987 that *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* did not exceed their level in the same month the year before. The U.S. economic slowdown teamed up with long-term problems plaguing the lumber and mining industries to slow the Panhandle's economic growth. See Panhandle Table 1 for details.

All *Goods-Producing* sectors had lower employment in May 2001 than the year before. The closure of Sunshine Mine in February caused the loss of more than 200 jobs and pushed Shoshone County's unemployment rate up to 13.6 percent by May. *Construction* employment ran below year-ago levels. The construction slowdown is hitting Bonner County hardest. Low lumber prices and increased imports of lumber from Canada have forced lumber mills to reduce jobs since the spring of 2000.

Although lumber prices rose in recent months, they began falling again in the last few weeks. If they continue to slide, further job losses could follow. In addition, the exceptionally rainy, cool spring extended spring break-up into May this year, idling more loggers than normal in the month of May. After growing strongly into the fall of 2000, *All Other Manufacturing* industries lost jobs in recent months. The U.S. economic slowdown

Panhandle Table 1: Labor Force & Employment

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	90,550	90,180	87,770	0.4	3.2
Unemployed	8,210	8,260	7,230	-0.6	13.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	9.1%	9.2%	8.2%		
Total Employment	82,340	81,920	80,540	0.5	2.2
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	90,320	89,680	87,660	0.7	3.0
Unemployed	7,830	9,480	7,000	-17.4	11.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	8.7%	10.6%	8.0%		
Total Employment	82,490	80,200	80,660	2.9	2.3
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	66,720	65,370	66,730	2.1	0.0
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	13,530	13,070	14,500	3.5	-6.7
Mining	790	790	1,000	0.0	-21.0
Construction	4,580	4,300	4,760	6.5	-3.8
Manufacturing	8,160	7,980	8,740	2.3	-6.6
Lumber & Wood Products	3,590	3,440	4,180	4.4	-14.1
All Other Manufacturing	4,570	4,540	4,560	0.7	0.2
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	53,190	52,300	52,230	1.7	1.8
Transportation	1,490	1,420	1,430	4.9	4.2
Communication & Utilities	1,050	1,030	1,030	1.9	1.9
Wholesale Trade	2,270	2,230	2,340	1.8	-3.0
Retail Trade	15,200	14,790	15,130	2.8	0.5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2,620	2,550	2,490	2.7	5.2
Service & Miscellaneous	16,890	16,780	16,570	0.7	1.9
Government Administration	8,150	7,990	7,740	2.0	5.3
Government Education	5,520	5,510	5,500	0.2	0.4
* Preliminary estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

has reduced demand for electronics, furniture, and other durable goods. Therefore, Panhandle manufacturers have lost the jobs they gained last summer.

The loss of jobs in high-paying *Goods-Producing* industries curtailed retail growth. In addition, many restaurants, tourist shops, convenience stores, and tourism facilities held off summer hiring as they waited to see what the summer tourist season would bring. Many people are concerned that forest fires, higher gasoline prices, or the shaky U.S. economy could reduce tourism this summer.

The postponement of summer hiring at some tourist facilities is one reason why *Services* employment grew only 1.9 percent over the year. Another reason was the bursting of the Internet bubble, which led to the loss of about 150 dot-com jobs. Another drag on *Services* came from the reduction in employment at temporary agencies that supplied workers to manufacturers. Fortunately, the positives outweighed the negatives. The opening of the Center Partners call center in Coeur d'Alene this March added 300 jobs.



Since May 2000, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe added nearly 100 jobs at its casino near Worley. Private-sector health care providers and social service agencies created about 300 new jobs.

Half of the job growth in *Government Administration* came from beefed-up hiring by the U.S. Forest Service to prepare for what experts say could be the worst fire season in half a century. Expansions by community hospitals and other local government entities explain the other half.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Benewah County

- Bobbi Doyse opened a gift shop this spring a mile north of Plummer on Highway 95. The shop features antiques, Western art, crystal art, and collectibles.

### Bonner County

- The City of Sandpoint recently received a \$500,000 community development block grant to build a wastewater treatment plant near the Sandpoint airport. The plant will treat wastewater containing butterfat, canola oil, and other byproducts of Litehouse Inc., Sandpoint's largest manufacturer, maker of salad dressings, dips, and sauces. During the last two years, Litehouse has shipped its wastewater to Montana. The total cost of the new wastewater plant will be \$750,000. Litehouse and the city are sharing the costs above \$500,000. The wastewater treatment plant will allow Litehouse and other food processors to expand. Over the next few years, Litehouse plans to build a new plant and create 50 more jobs. Construction of the wastewater plant will start in July.
- Pneumex Inc. recently moved into a new facility at 3115 N. Boyer in Sandpoint. For the last eight years, Pneumex's dozen employees have been located in the Bonner Business Center, the business incubator near the Sandpoint airport. Pneumex, owned by Gerry and Karin Cook, manufactures therapy equipment he designs to treat lower back problems and other conditions relating to the spine. Athletic trainers, physical therapists, chiropractors, and players in the PGA, NHL, NFL, and NBA use Pneumex equipment. Before the move, Pneumex employed about a dozen people. Additional space and growing demand for its product should increase Pneumex's employment during the next year.
- Carol and Gary Kunzeman recently opened Granny Thimble's Quilt Cottage at 1175 Fontaine Drive in Ponderay. The new store sells quilting supplies and offers quilting and sewing lessons.
- A Cost Cutters Family Hair Care Salon opened in late June in the newly "super-sized" Wal-Mart in Ponderay.

### Kootenai County

- Kootenai Medical Center, the community hospital in Coeur d'Alene, plans to remodel its inpatient sur-

gery center and enlarge its pharmacy. The \$3 million construction project is slated to begin this fall and to be completed in early 2002.

- The town of Harrison on Lake Coeur d'Alene recently welcomed a new store owned by five local artists. The Blue Heron features floral arrangements by June McClain, bath products by Laurie Edmonds, birdhouses by Rick Voss, clothing and bags by Jan Voss, and wildlife sculptures by Vicki Fay. Other local artists sell handcrafted items by consignment at the gift shop.

### Shoshone County

- The price of silver continues to fall. In 2000, it peaked at \$5.53 per troy ounce in February. It fell to \$4.60, its lowest level of the year, by the end of December. In mid-June, it was \$4.45.
- The falling price of silver forced the closure of the Sunshine Mine four months ago. Now, it is threatening the continued operation of one of the two mines that remain open in Shoshone County. The jobs of the 185 people who work at the Lucky Friday mine near Mullan are hanging in the balance. At the current price of silver, the Lucky Friday is not profitable.
- The mine's owner, Coeur d'Alene-based Hecla Mining, must make a critical decision in the next few months. To continue operations in the long run, Hecla must make a \$6 million ramp to access the next level of ore. Without the ramp, the mine will run out of ore in about two years. The next level is 5,700 feet below the surface, and the ramp will take a year to complete. Ideally, ramp construction should start in January to guarantee continuous operation of the mine. Hecla currently is assessing the costs and benefits of the ramp, and the Silver Valley is waiting anxiously for Hecla's decision, to be announced in early August.
- Meanwhile, the Silver Valley is struggling with the ramifications of Sunshine's closure. Many families are choosing to move out of the valley. Dozens of former Shoshone County miners now work at the Stillwater mine near Nye, Montana. Many are commuting—working seven days at the mine and spending the next seven with their families in Shoshone County. Some other Shoshone County residents are choosing to move, because they believe employment opportunities are drying up. More than 600 houses in Shoshone County are listed for sale. The 2000 Census counted 5,906 occupied housing units in Shoshone County.

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# SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

As shown in Seaport Table 1, the Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased in May to 4.4 percent from April's rate of 4.5 percent. In May 2000, the rate was 3.9 percent. An increase in total employment for May reversed a 12-month trend of decreases. Still, even with the increase, employment was weak for a traditionally strong employment month. In the Employment by Industry section below we will discuss the employment situation more fully. The good news is that since last year at this time, May 2000, the *Civilian Labor Force* has increased by 1.5 percent. The bad news; May is the only month in 2001 to show any indication of an increase in employment. Employment since January has declined in almost all industries by small amounts. Business leaders feel that the bad news, such as layoffs in major manufacturing sectors and the poor economic condition of surrounding communities, has created a business attitude that has become more conservative, slowing employment growth. Expansion plans are being put on hold until they can determine the resiliency of the economy to cope with the layoffs.

In May, Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased 140 jobs from April 2000, but decreased 840 from May 2000. Most of the increase since April was in *Government Administration*, mainly because of hiring for roadwork crews and parks/recreation maintenance. Employment in both *Manufacturing* and *Construction* increased, a good indicator that employment will grow in the future. Only two decreases were noted in May and both were expected. *Government Education* decreased which is normal for this time of year, because of schools summer vacation. And *Finance* employment decreased because of mergers and consolidations. The real news from last year is that employment decreases occurred in almost all industries. The decreases

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Nez Perce County, Idaho, and Asotin County, Washington

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	34,980	34,790	34,450	0.5	1.5
Unemployment	1,530	1,550	1,340	-1.3	14.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.4%	4.5%	3.9%		
Total Employment	33,450	33,240	33,110	0.6	1.0
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	35,020	34,840	34,550	0.5	1.4
Unemployment	1,400	1,570	1,210	-10.8	15.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.0%	4.5%	3.5%		
Total Employment	33,620	33,270	33,340	1.1	0.8
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	25,930	25,790	26,770	0.5	-3.1
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	5,180	5,100	5,510	1.6	-6.0
Mining & Construction	1,360	1,330	1,430	2.3	-4.9
Manufacturing	3,820	3,770	4,080	1.3	-6.4
Food Processing	70	70	130	0.0	-46.2
Lumber & Wood Products	710	690	730	2.9	-2.7
Paper Products	1,700	1,700	1,830	0.0	-7.1
All Other Manufacturing	1,340	1,310	1,390	2.3	-3.6
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	20,750	20,690	21,260	0.3	-2.4
Transportation	1,340	1,350	1,320	-0.7	1.5
Communications & Utilities	280	280	290	0.0	-3.4
Wholesale Trade	950	940	970	1.1	-2.1
Retail Trade	5,300	5,290	5,310	0.2	-0.2
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,330	1,380	1,450	-3.6	-8.3
Services	7,000	6,960	7,540	0.6	-7.2
Government Administration	2,020	1,910	1,920	5.8	5.2
Government Education	2,530	2,580	2,460	-1.9	2.8
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

across the board could mean, as mentioned above, that businesses are speculating on the regions economic attitude and how capably the economy can absorb layoffs. Because of its diversity, I believe the economy will survive and continue to grow, although at a reduced rate.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Clearwater County

- The city of Orofino has been awarded almost \$2 million in state and federal grants to build a new 6.5-acre industrial park. The planned 26,000-square-foot building will house up to four businesses that could provide employment for as many as 150 people. The industrial park will be located along U.S. Highway 12 between the Orofino Cemetery and the Department of Transportation building. Anchoring the new site will be Architectural Signs and Engraving Inc. (ASE), which employs almost 50 people. ASE has been in Orofino since 1994 and has committed to bring on five additional employees each year for the next five years. It will almost double the size of its plant by

moving into the new complex. The city is in negotiations with several out-of-state companies to fill vacant space at the industrial park. And while names of the companies are not being released, the city is confident that they will have little problem filling vacancies. Companies at the site are expected to supply jobs that pay between \$8 to \$12 an hour.

- A new Subway has opened at 11330 Highway 12 in Orofino. The new franchise is locally owned and operated.

#### **Idaho & Lewis Counties**

- The bowling alley in Craigmont that burned to the ground in 1990 is being rebuilt thanks to a community-wide effort. The community, under the organization of Prairie Bowl Inc., sold more than 230 shares at \$500 each to local people. It's been more than a year since the community bought lanes from Lewiston's Imperial Bowl. With fund-raising efforts and a loan of \$102,000 from Clearwater Economic Development Association, the dream of a new bowling alley is becoming a reality.

#### **Latah County**

- Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories Inc. (SEL) has announced an expansion of its Pullman Plant by 60 percent in the next year. SEL will hire an additional 50 employees in 2001. "We're pretty cautious in hiring this year," company president and founder Ed Schweitzer said, noting many national companies who over-hired for the economic environment. The expansion plan is not as conservative. It will create a total of 200,000 square feet of building space at the Port of Whitman County Industrial park on the north edge of Pullman. The 40,000-square-foot addition will be added to the current manufacturing building, which covers 65,000 square feet. In just a year, the company has outgrown the plant, Schweitzer said. The company is Pullman's biggest success story and second largest employer, after Washington State University. It manufactures industrial electrical relays and operates 39 customer service offices from Charlotte, N.C. to Bolivia.
- Pacific Simulation of Moscow expects to more than triple its workforce to about 160 following the announcement that the company was purchased by international conglomerate Invensys. Invensys is a holding company of one of the largest corporations that develop systems for industrial automations and control. Jim Haynes, a Pacific Simulation founder, said the 12-year-old software company sought the buyout to support the rapid rollout of a software system for newsprint mills. Invensys believes the system can become the world standard. Pacific Simulation will retain its name and expand at its Moscow location.
- Starbucks and Denny's will open new restaurants in Moscow. Starbucks, the Seattle-based retail coffee

giant, is slated to open in July at the Palouse Empire Mall. The business will occupy the space formerly housing Flowers Etc., which has moved to a remodeled space at the mall. An opening date for Denny's has not been set yet, but the location of the restaurant will be 121 War Bonnet. You may not recognize the Moscow Denny's because it will differ from the traditional look and have more of a diner appearance with a stainless steel exterior and a "50's" theme inside.

- Gritman Medical Center in Moscow has announced plans to add a \$20 million south wing. The hospital's planned expansion would require closing of a one-block portion of Eighth Street, immediately south of the hospital. The new wing would be constructed on the street and on land owned by Gritman. The expansion would increase hospital bed space by 25 percent; the number of operating rooms would double to four; beds in the same-day surgery center would increase from six to fourteen; and emergency room space would double. Plans also call for moving the hospital's helipad to the roof and increasing parking.

#### **Nez Perce County & Asotin Counties**

- The Port of Wilma is moving forward with expansion plans in an attempt to draw more industrial businesses to fuel economic growth in the Lewiston/Clarkston Valley. "We're trying to enhance the port and provide the infrastructure—good old fashioned, basic, heavy industry infrastructure," said Joe Poire, executive director for the Port of Whitman, which administers the Port of Wilma. Occupancy at the 250-acre port, located across Red Wolf Crossing Bridge from Clarkston, has hovered between 98 and 100 percent the past few years and additional companies are asking for space, Poire said. The port is working on a 30-acre expansion plan on property purchased from the Army Corps of Engineers. "I don't see us having a call center or a computer wafer chip manufacturing plant," Poire said, "I see steady growth in heavy industry".
- The Nez Perce Tribe is betting the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial commemoration will bring more tourists to its casinos. A feasibility study and plans are being evaluated to give the Clearwater Casino located near Lewiston a facelift, and a permanent building. Plans also call for a hotel, entertainment and convention center, food and beverage outlets and a golf course.

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# TREASURE VALLEY

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY, & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Boise City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) was 3.9 percent for May 2001, as shown in Treasure Valley Table 1. This rate was two-tenths of a percentage point above the April 2001 rate of 3.7 percent, and was up four-tenths of a percentage point from the May 2000 rate of 3.5 percent. The number of individuals employed increased from 239,200 to 240,900 and an increase occurred in the number of unemployed individuals, from 9,300 to 9,700. The net increase in the *Civilian Labor Force* was 2,100 from April 2001 to May 2001, and an increase of 14,200 individuals from one year ago. Treasure Valley Table 2 shows the May 2001 labor force figures for all counties in Southwest Idaho.

Treasure Valley Table 2: April 2001 Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Figures for Southwest Idaho Counties				
	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unem- ployed	Percent Unem- ployed	Number Employed
Ada	181,070	6,020	3.3	175,050
Adams	1,600	215	13.3	1,385
Boise	2,535	125	4.9	2,410
Canyon	69,510	3,640	5.2	65,870
Elmore	9,290	560	6.0	8,730
Gem	6,475	395	6.1	6,080
Owyhee	4,105	195	4.8	3,910
Payette	10,230	680	6.6	9,550
Valley	4,280	310	7.2	3,970
Washington	4,660	360	7.7	4,300
Statewide	680,000	32,800	4.8	647,200

The number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* grew by 2,600 between April 2001 and May 2001, and grew by 7,600 jobs since May 2000. *Goods-Producing Industries* gained 500 jobs over the month. Job gains in *Construction & Mining* (400) and *Transportation Equipment Manufacturing* (100) and *Other Nondurable Goods Manufacturing* (100) outpaced job losses in *Fabricated Metal Products Manufacturing* (100). Since May 2000, the only *Goods-Producing Industries* to experience a job gain were *Construc-*

Treasure Valley Table 1: Boise MSA Labor Force & Employment  
Ada and Canyon counties

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change Last Month	% Change Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	250,600	248,500	236,400	0.8	6.0
Unemployment	9,700	9,300	8,300	4.3	16.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.9%	3.7%	3.5%		
Total Employment	240,900	239,200	228,100	0.7	5.6
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	250,000	246,700	235,900	1.3	6.0
Unemployment	9,100	9,000	7,800	1.1	16.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6%	3.6%	3.3%		
Total Employment	240,900	237,700	228,100	1.3	5.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	233,700	231,100	226,100	1.1	2.2
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	54,600	54,100	54,100	0.9	0.0
<b>Mining &amp; Construction</b>	17,100	16,700	16,000	2.4	4.4
<b>Manufacturing</b>	37,500	37,400	38,100	0.3	-1.8
Durable Goods	29,200	29,200	29,600	0.0	-1.4
Lumber & Wood Products	4,000	4,000	4,600	0.0	-13.0
Wood Buildings & Mobile Homes	800	800	1,000	0.0	-20.0
Other Lumber & Wood Products	3,200	3,200	3,600	0.0	-11.1
Fabricated Metal Products	1,100	1,200	1,200	-8.3	0.0
Ind. & Comm. Mach. & Computer Equip.	7,300	7,300	8,000	0.0	-8.8
Electronic & Other Elect. Equip. & Comp.	13,000	13,000	11,800	0.0	10.2
Transportation Equipment	1,800	1,700	2,100	5.9	-19.0
Other Durable Goods	2,000	2,000	1,900	0.0	5.3
Nondurable Goods	8,300	8,200	8,500	1.2	-3.5
Food Products	5,400	5,400	5,700	0.0	-5.3
Canned Cured & Frozen Foods	1,600	1,600	1,800	0.0	-11.1
Printing, Pub & Allied Products	2,000	2,000	1,900	0.0	5.3
Other Nondurable Goods	900	800	900	12.5	-11.1
SERVICE-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	179,100	177,000	172,000	1.2	2.9
<b>Trans, Comm, &amp; Public Util</b>	12,200	12,100	11,900	0.8	1.7
Transportation	6,800	6,800	6,400	0.0	6.3
Comm & Elec, Gas & Sanitary Services	5,400	5,300	5,500	1.9	-3.6
<b>Trade</b>	58,300	57,600	55,000	1.2	4.7
Wholesale Trade	13,800	13,700	13,300	0.7	3.0
Durable Goods	8,500	8,400	8,000	1.2	5.0
Nondurable Goods	5,300	5,300	5,300	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	44,500	43,900	41,700	1.4	5.3
General Merchandise Stores	6,200	6,100	4,400	1.6	38.6
Foods Stores	7,700	7,600	7,800	1.3	-2.6
Eating & Drinking Places	15,600	15,300	15,000	2.0	2.0
Other Retail Trade	15,000	14,900	14,500	0.7	2.8
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	11,100	11,000	11,200	0.9	-1.8
<b>Services</b>	62,000	61,100	59,100	1.5	3.4
Business Services	14,900	14,700	15,200	1.4	-3.3
Health Services	18,000	17,900	16,400	0.6	9.1
Hospitals	8,600	8,500	7,400	1.2	14.9
Eng., Acct., Res., Mngmt., & Related	4,900	4,800	4,300	2.1	11.6
Other Services	24,200	23,700	23,200	2.1	2.2
<b>Government</b>	35,500	35,200	34,800	0.9	1.1
Federal Government	5,200	5,100	6,000	2.0	-15.0
State Government	13,100	13,100	12,500	0.0	4.8
Education	4,500	4,600	4,200	-2.2	9.5
Administration	8,600	8,500	8,300	1.2	2.4
Local Government	17,200	17,000	16,300	1.2	4.3
Education	11,400	11,300	10,700	0.9	5.6
Administration	5,800	5,700	5,600	1.8	1.8

\* Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

*tion & Mining* (1,100), *Electronic & Other Electric Equipment & Components* (1,200), *Other Durable Goods Manufacturing* (100), and *Printing, Publishing & Allied Products Manufacturing* (100); the other industries experienced job losses with the most jobs lost in *Industrial & Communications Machinery & Computer Equipment Manufacturing* (700). The increases in *Goods-Producing Industries* accounted for 19.2 percent of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* added over the month and 6.6 percent of the jobs created over the year.

*Service-Producing Industries* added 2,100 jobs in the Boise City MSA from April 2001 to May 2001, and added 7,100 jobs since May 2000. The only industry that showed a job loss over the month was *State Government Education* (100); with the most job gains noted in *Eating & Drinking Places* (300), *Business Services* (200), and *Other Services* (500). Since May 2000, there was significant job growth in *General Merchandise Stores* (1,800), *Health Services* (1,600), and *Other Services* (1,000). The industries that experienced a job loss over the year were *Communications & Electricity*, *Gas & Sanitary Services*, *Food Stores*, *Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate*, *Business Services*, and *Federal Government*. The increase in *Service-Producing Industries* accounted for 80.8 percent of the jobs created over the month and 93.4 percent of the jobs created over the year.

## **SPECIAL TOPICS:**

### **Idaho Growth**

In early June, the U.S. Department of Commerce released a report indicating economic growth for the nation. Idaho ranked 5<sup>th</sup> on that list, accompanied by seven other states that outperformed the national average in the past decade. Idaho ranked 6.6 during the 1992-99 period while the national average growth rate was 4 percent. Arizona was at the top of the list with a 7.3 percent growth rate followed by Nevada (7.0 percent), Oregon (6.8 percent), Colorado (6.6 percent), Idaho (6.6 percent), New Hampshire (6.3 percent), Utah (6.3 percent), New Mexico (6.2 percent), Georgia (5.8 percent), Texas (5.4 percent), and North Carolina (5.1 percent). Hawaii and Alaska showed the worst economic performance during the period with 0.3 and 0.5 growth rates, respectively. The report shows that nearly half of Idaho's average annual expansion was noted in *Manufacturing*, which is the same sector that has announced hundreds of layoffs over the past six months, questioning the state's future economic outlook.

### **Treasure Valley Job Outlook**

Manpower, Inc. released its quarterly Employment Outlook Survey in late May. For the July through September 2001 period, 30 percent of the Boise companies interviewed expressed plans to increase their workforce, 7 percent expect to reduce their workforce, and the remaining 63 percent plan to keep their workforces stable.

The number of companies planning to hire more employees is down from last year, due to the softening of the national economy. According to the survey, jobs will increase in construction, wholesale and retail trade, and services, while job reductions are expected in finance, insurance, and real estate. Mixed projections were reported for transportation and utilities industries.

## **AREA DEVELOPMENTS**

### **BOISE CITY MSA**

- The \$64 million statehouse renovation project is scheduled to begin with phase one on July 15. Renovation and repair work will begin on the Capitol's exterior. The major part of the restoration, including overhauling the Capitol's interior and bringing the historic building up to building and life-safety codes, will not begin until 2003. The entire project will be completed by 2005, just in time for the centennial anniversary of the beginning of the Capitol's construction.
- In late May, ZiLOG, Inc. announced plans to sell its Nampa fabrication plant. ZiLOG employs 500 Treasure Valley residents, although no comment was made by the company on how many of these employees could be affected by the sale of the fabrication plant, and no negotiations are currently underway to sell the plant. ZiLOG employs 1,100 people worldwide.
- Hewlett-Packard will release a new digital color printing press for sale in the United States this summer. The HP Digital Press 6600 allows for up to six colors and high-fidelity printing, along with quick turnaround time and software that allows users to prioritize, interrupt and resume jobs, and accept submissions directly from company intranets. The press has a price range of \$200,000 to \$400,000.
- Extended Systems, Inc. in Boise has announced the layoff of 50 full-time and contract workers throughout the company. The number of workers in Boise who will be laid off was not announced. In addition to the layoffs, the company also issued a mandatory two-week vacation between July and September for all employees and a hiring freeze. The company also sold its printing business to Troy Group, Inc. of Irvine, CA, which will relocate 38 of Extended Systems employees to Troy Group.
- In early June, Micronpc.com announced 250 more layoffs due to final negotiations with Gores Technology Group. The people laid off were given a 60-day notice and continued to receive paychecks and benefits.
- In late May, SCP Global Technologies announced

the completion of its major expansion project that started last year. The expansion project included the addition of a new customer demonstration lab and an expansion of its manufacturing and training facilities.

- The Warhawk Air Museum opened at its new location at the Nampa Municipal Airport in late May. The museum moved from its original location in Caldwell, to Nampa to allow more space for valuable artifacts and memorabilia, mostly from the WWII era. The building that houses the Warhawk Air Museum also houses traveling NASA space exhibits, a gift shop, research library, and classrooms. Future plans for the museum include the addition of displays from the Korean and Vietnam wars.
- Cycle Nuts and Bolts, Boise's only authorized Harley-Davidson dealer, has announced plans to open a new Caldwell dealership by spring 2002. The new facility will be built near the Elks Club on Kimball Avenue in Caldwell. Along with the dealership, an on-site motorcycle safety course for new riders will be available. The company sells Harley-Davidson and Buell motorcycles.
- Decibel Products, an Allen Telecom company, announced the opening of a customer service center in Boise. The new customer service center has four employees who will serve customers throughout the Oregon, Washington, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho area.
- Cassidy Plaza, a \$1 million facility that will be dedicated to small professional offices in Eagle, is expected to start construction later this year. The plaza will contain two buildings, 5,000-square-feet each, on Academy Avenue, north of State Street. The construction should be finished by late fall.
- Port of Subs, a Reno-based submarine sandwich chain, has announced plans to open its first Idaho unit in the Family Center, located off Federal Way in Boise. The company has leased a 1,100-square-foot space in the 20,000-square-foot single-story retail building that currently houses Affordable Pet Clinic and Hair Masters. Also opening later this year in the same building, is Cold Stone Creamery. Port of Subs also plans to open another facility in or near the Meridian Crossroads shopping center by next year and a third location near downtown or Boise State University by April 2002.
- Sonic Corporation, based in Oklahoma City, has announced plans to open 15 drive-ins in the next three years in the Treasure Valley. Each drive-in employs

30-60 people. Currently, franchisees are negotiating on sites for two more Sonic units in Boise and one in Garden City that would open within the next year.

- A Jack in the Box fast food restaurant has started construction in the Five Mile Plaza in Boise. The construction should be completed in August.
- Mira Plaza, a new 11,000-square-foot building on the north side of State Street at Mira Avenue in Star has leased space to its first tenants, a Pizza Hut restaurant and The Lucky Star, a coffee shop.
- Mr. Dollar opened a new store in the Holly Shopping Center in Nampa. Mr. Dollar employs 10-12 individuals in the new store. The company currently has another store open in Eagle and expects to open two or three additional stores in the Treasure Valley.
- The Plum Tree restaurant and furniture store recently closed its doors resulting from pressures of new restaurants and a drop in furniture sales. The Plum Tree restaurant closed on May 1 and the furniture business is going through a liquidation process.
- A new homeless shelter is scheduled for Nampa. Construction on the new facility will begin in mid-July. The 56-bed facility will be operated by Nampa's Salvation Army, and programs will be provided to help homeless individuals and families move back into mainstream society.
- Wells Fargo opened a new branch in the East Cleveland Boulevard Albertson's store. A full range of banking services, a full-service ATM, and a customer service direct phone line are available in the new Wells Fargo branch.
- Coldwater Creek opened a store in the Boise Towne Square mall in late May.

#### **Adams County**

- Western Timber has announced that it hopes to open a plant in Council on business park land in fall 2001. The company will continue to operate its facility in Weiser, with the expansion of an additional facility in Council. The company will initially hire 8 to 10 people, but could eventually employ 30 at the facility. The Council City Council discussed an expansion of the business park and the agreement with Western Timber is being finalized. Under the agreement, the city plans to lease the property at no charge to Western Timber for five years, at which time the agreement will be renegotiated.
- In mid-May, a new community outreach center, The Community House, and a Thrift Store shared grand

openings in New Meadows. The Community House funds scholarships to graduating seniors of Meadows Valley High School who plan on continuing their education, as well as assisting area families in need of help.

- Idaho Power announced that it is permanently closing its Cambridge operations center this summer. The construction crew will move to Boise and there will be two line personnel still available which will allow the response to outages and emergencies to stay unchanged.

#### **Elmore County**

- Integrity Auto Sales opened in Mountain Home in early June. The company is located at 590 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street West and is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m.
- Elmore County has received recreation grants totaling \$143,157. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) approved the grants to help rural Idaho upgrade and add recreation facilities. Idahoans and visitors to the state use these recreation facilities.

#### **Gem County**

- The Gem County Recreation District (GCRD) and the YMCA are continuing to discuss a possible partnership to bring the YMCA to Gem County. The main issue is the funding of the YMCA and the programs that it will provide to the community.
- In early June, Gem County celebrated the 67<sup>th</sup> annual Cherry Festival.

#### **Payette County**

- Construction started in June on a \$15 million, 69,500-square-foot expansion on the Holy Rosary Medical Center. The new expansion will provide extra rooms and new facilities for patients. When the project is finished, about 7,500 square feet of the existing hospital will be remodeled and there will be six operating rooms instead of four.
- Fruitland Produce Barn celebrated its grand opening on Thursday, May 31. The Produce Barn features locally grown produce and is operated from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m. daily.
- The Daily Buzz opened in New Plymouth in early June. The Daily Buzz is located at 129 N. Plymouth Street and offers a variety of products including espresso, Italian sodas, blended ice drinks, snow cones, smoothies, chai tea, and pastries. The coffee shop is open from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays and from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. on weekends.

#### **Valley County**

- In early June, Valley County commissioners approved an application filed by Seubert Excavators of Cottonwood to allow a new rock pit south of Donnelly. The company plans to operate an excavation pit to procure basalt near the intersection of Goode Lane and Koskella Road. County officials stated that the homes located near the proposed pit may be purchased by the county, although no final decision has been made, but the appraisal process has begun.
- In mid-May, plans for new Valley County Fairgrounds to be built along the North Fork of the Payette River in Cascade were revealed by the Southern Valley County Recreational District. The new fairgrounds are being planned in conjunction with a new community recreation center. The proposed fairgrounds would include an exhibit hall, a barn for livestock sales, a horse barn, a picnic area, a multi-use field, and a 2,500-seat rodeo arena that would include covered seating. The project, if approved, could cost approximately \$11 million.

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# MAGIC VALLEY

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA, & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

As seen in Magic Valley Table 1, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Magic Valley LMA was 4.0 percent in May 2001. This was unchanged from April 2001 and five-tenths of a percentage point less than May 2000.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* has declined slightly since May 2000, as new job creation has slowed in the Magic Valley reflecting statewide and nationwide trends toward a cooling economy. The sector that showed the largest increase from 2000 to 2001 was *Government Education*; however, much of that increase is attributable to adjustments in the numbers to more accurately reflect the employment picture since last year. *Transportation, Communications, and Utilities* also grew slightly, as did *Wholesale Trade*. Employment sectors with declines over the last year include *Retail Trade*; *Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate*; *Services*; and *Government Administration*. The reasons behind these declines are general economic cooling and the effect of recent bank mergers on employment.

As mentioned above, the overall employment picture reflects an easing of economic growth as well as less consumer confidence and cautious staffing by employers. As the national and state economies continue to show mixed signals, it is expected that this static situation in Magic Valley employment will continue throughout 2001.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Twin Falls County

- Curtis H. Eaton has been selected as the new vice-president of institutional planning and development and executive director of the College of Southern Idaho Foundation. Mr. Eaton is the south-central Idaho division president of Wells Fargo Bank and a lifetime resident of Twin Falls. He also served as a member of the Idaho Board of Education from 1993

Magic Valley Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Twin Falls, Jerome, and Gooding counties

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	48,130	49,310	47,110	-2.4	2.2
Unemployment	1,900	1,970	2,130	-3.6	-10.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.0%	4.0%	4.5%		
Total Employment	46,230	47,340	44,980	-2.3	2.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	48,300	48,380	47,290	-0.2	2.1
Unemployment	1,740	1,820	1,940	-4.4	-10.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6%	3.8%	4.1%		
Total Employment	46,560	46,560	45,350	0.0	2.7
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	37,640	37,510	37,680	0.3	-0.1
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	6,900	6,870	7,050	0.4	-2.1
Mining & Construction	2,070	1,940	2,100	6.7	-1.4
Manufacturing	4,830	4,930	4,950	-2.0	-2.4
Durable Goods	820	880	850	-6.8	-3.5
Nondurable Goods	4,010	4,050	4,100	-1.0	-2.2
Food Processing	2,970	2,980	3,040	-0.3	-2.3
All Other Nondurable Goods	1,040	1,070	1,060	-2.8	-1.9
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	30,740	30,640	30,630	0.3	0.4
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,830	2,820	2,810	0.4	0.7
Wholesale Trade	2,340	2,330	2,310	0.4	1.3
Retail Trade	8,150	8,080	8,170	0.9	-0.2
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,270	1,310	1,320	-3.1	-3.8
Services	8,230	8,080	8,490	1.9	-3.1
Government Administration	3,710	3,700	3,770	0.3	-1.6
Government Education	4,210	4,320	3,760	-2.5	12.0

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

until his resignation when he accepted the CSI position. His resignation from banking is effective July 15, 2001, and he will begin work for CSI the next day.

- Solo Cup, Inc. has been awarded a contract to provide 80,000 cases of three-piece school cafeteria kits to the Los Angeles School System cafeterias. As a result of the increased business, Solo Cup has increased and stabilized its employment at 15 full-time operators for each of the company's four shifts with two to four temporary operators per shift. The temporary employees will become full-time operators if the business maintains. The three-piece kits consist of a napkin, a "spork" (a spoon-shaped utensil with fork-like tines) and a "spike-straw" with a sharp end for puncturing milk cartons. The contract will last one year with an automatic renewal for another year if the product meets the contractor's quality standards.



- China's Ambassador to the United States, Yang Jiechi, and Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne attended a reception at the College of Southern Idaho's Herrett Center to promote Idaho-China trade relations. The Chinese delegation, consisting of Mr. Yang and 24 Shanghai government, education, and business leaders, arrived in Twin Falls after first visiting Boise and touring a Buhl trout farm. Governor Kempthorne will be leading an Idaho trade mission to China in October and Mr. Yang expressed his hope that through this mutual exchange that Idahoans will learn more about Shanghai.
- The Twin Falls County Commission has imposed its fourth moratorium on dairies since July 2000. The purpose of the 120-day moratorium is to allow the county commission to continue to work with dairy operators and the public to draft a county ordinance covering dairy operations. The moratorium restricts any new dairies with greater than 77 milking cows from setting up locally, or the expansion of existing dairies with greater than 77 milking cows. The county commissioners expect to have an ordinance ready for public hearings in late July or early August.
- Three American Red Cross employees in Twin Falls will be laid off as a result of statewide budget cuts in the American Red Cross of Greater Idaho. The Rupert Office will be closed and two staff members transferred to Twin Falls. In the change, one full-time and two part-time positions will be eliminated and one full-time Twin Falls employee will be reduced to half-time. Statewide, 13.5 staff positions will be cut.

#### **Jerome, Gooding, Lincoln, Camas, & Blaine Counties**

- A T & T announced the location of its new Point of Presence (PoP) site on the butte east of Jerome. The new facility allows A T & T Internet users a closer connection point to the fiber optics line that runs through downtown Jerome as opposed to connecting in Pocatello or Boise. Jerome is one of only two PoP sites recently located in Idaho. The other site serves the Lewiston area and the two facilities together were an investment of \$1.5 million. It is expected that this new site will assist greatly in the recruitment of technology businesses to the Jerome area.
- The Gooding County Commission voted to extend the moratorium on confined animal feeding operations for another 120 days so that the county ordi-

nance can be rewritten to deal with dairy-related issues such as air quality, dust control, and soil nutrient imbalances.

- The U. S. Postal Service will open its new \$3 million Ketchum Post Office on July 23, 2001. Three years in the planning, the new 17,700-square-foot facility will be located on the corner of Second Avenue and Fourth Street in Ketchum. Postal Service employees plan to make the transition to the new office on Saturday and Sunday, July 21 and 22. Outgoing mail services will not be interrupted, and regular delivery service will only be interrupted on the transition days.

#### **Cassia and Minidoka Counties**

- The Mini-Cassia Job Service held the Open House for its new facility on June 20, 2001. Idaho Department of Labor Director Roger Madsen and Department representatives from Boise, along with the management team from the Magic Valley Job Service, joined the Mini-Cassia staff in welcoming many state and local officials to the event. Idaho Industrial Commission Chairman James F. Kile, State Senator Denton Darrington, and other dignitaries participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony sponsored by the Mini-Cassia Chamber of Commerce. Senator Darrington thanked the Idaho Department of Labor for its commitment to the Mini-Cassia area. Mini-Cassia staff conducted tours for the public for the entire day. The new facility has 17 computer terminals in the resource area for customer use and two conference rooms and an employer interview room. The Idaho Industrial Commission also has located its Mini-Cassia Office in the new facility partnering with the Idaho Department of Labor. The new office is over twice the size of the old office that was demolished to make room for the parking area. The Open House was very well attended and staff members participated in radio broadcasts by KAT Country 92.5 FM during the event.

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# SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

The Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's (MSA) seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in May 2001 dropped three-tenths of a percentage point to 3.9 percent from April's revised rate of 4.2 percent. Southeast Idaho Table 1 shows that from April to May, 410 more individuals entered the labor force, 540 more individuals were employed, and 130 fewer individuals were unemployed, leading to the drop in the unemployment rate. The Pocatello MSA has not recorded an unemployment rate this low since the current tracking system began in 1978. The Pocatello MSA's unemployment rate remained below the state's rate of 4.8 percent.

From May 2000 to May 2001, the unemployment rate dropped a full percentage point from 4.9 percent to 3.9 percent. The creation of new jobs in the *Retail Trade* and *Services* industries increased employment opportunities in the MSA.

The number of *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 110 in May, rising from 33,300 in April 2001 to 33,410 in May 2001. Job increases were split between the *Goods-Producing Industries* (50) and the *Service-Producing Industries* (60). Warm weather allowed construction workers to begin new projects, sports events to occur in the area, and parks and recreation work to get under way which added jobs in *Construction* (70), *Services* (60), and *Government Administration* (50).

## SPECIAL TOPIC:

### Business Roundtables

The Pocatello Job Service has implemented quarterly Business Roundtables to educate area business professionals on a variety of employment-related topics, and to provide an opportunity for roundtable discussion of employment-related issues between Job Service professionals and area businesses. In May, the topic was "Unemployment Insurance" and discussions covered Unemployment Eligibility, the Unemployment Filing Process, Quit vs. Discharge, Documentation, and Protecting Your Account (lowering or maintaining unemployment insurance rates). Businesses can ensure the lowest possible unemployment insurance tax rate by follow-

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	40,680	40,270	39,010	1.0	4.3
Unemployment	1,570	1,700	1,920	-7.6	-18.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.9%	4.2%	4.9%		
Total Employment	39,110	38,570	37,090	1.4	5.4
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	40,580	40,460	38,910	0.3	4.3
Unemployment	1,510	1,660	1,870	-9.0	-19.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.7%	4.1%	4.8%		
Total Employment	39,070	38,800	37,040	0.7	5.5
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	33,410	33,300	33,150	0.3	0.8
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	4,510	4,460	4,600	1.1	-2.0
Mining & Construction	1,610	1,540	1,720	4.5	-6.4
Manufacturing	2,900	2,920	2,880	-0.7	0.7
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	28,900	28,840	28,550	0.2	1.2
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	1,780	1,800	1,870	-1.1	-4.8
Wholesale Trade	1,480	1,480	1,410	0.0	5.0
Retail Trade	7,120	7,130	6,940	-0.1	2.6
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,440	1,430	1,470	0.7	-2.0
Services	8,100	8,040	7,940	0.7	2.0
Government Administration	3,460	3,410	3,520	1.5	-1.7
Government Education	5,520	5,550	5,400	-0.5	2.2

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

ing the guidelines listed below to assure only those workers who are truly eligible will receive unemployment insurance benefits.

## PERSONAL ELIGIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

- Out of work through no fault of your own.
- Physically able to work.
- Fully available to work.
- Actively seeking or returning to full-time work.

## FILING PROCESS

- Claimant separation statement filed through Job Service.
- Job Service sends your business the separation statement.
- If layoff is because of lack-of-work, no further action.
- If separation is a quit, discharge, or leave of absence, employer has seven days to respond.

## QUIT

- Reason for quit must be work related.
- Reason for quit must be so serious there is no other option but to quit.
- Must show all options available to resolve issue have been pursued prior to quitting.

## DISCHARGE

- A willful disregard of the employer's interests.
- A deliberate violation of a reasonable rule.

- A disregard for a standard of behavior, which the employer has a reasonable right to expect.

#### **DOCUMENTATION**

- Written warnings.
- Copy of relevant policy.
- Documented verbal warnings.
- Signed acknowledgement of receipt of policy of warning.
- First person witness statements.
- Time cards, attendance records, medical reports, etc.

#### **PROTECT YOUR ACCOUNT**

- Issue a handbook or policy to each employee.
- Issue written warnings signed by employee.
- If possible, have witnesses.
- Convey policy changes consistently.
- Deal fairly with all employees.
- Inform Job Service of incident that caused discharge.
- Provide Job Service with a first-hand account of what happened.
- Gather supporting documentation.
- Respond to Job Service requests in a timely manner.

#### **TIPS FOR KEEPING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COSTS DOWN**

1. Hire the right person for the job. Do not hire someone who says they will take the job until something else shows up, or will take part time, but wants full time.
2. Recall laid-off workers who are drawing unemployment insurance. You will continue to be charged while they are drawing unemployment insurance. Don't use a layoff as a way of getting rid of someone you should have fired.
3. Give new employees an orientation to the company rules, regulations, etc. Don't hand out a handbook and require a signature before they have read it. Do continuous training and periodic evaluations.
4. Have a short probation period, for example, thirty days. Don't extend the probation period without an understanding of how long, and the conditions to be met.
5. Don't make promises that you really don't mean. For example, "You stay with me and you'll be making \$30,000 a year", or "You will get a raise in 30 days." (Is it contingent upon meeting some standard?)
6. Be fair; treat everyone the same. Don't keep an employee on just to be nice. ("They have a family to feed," etc.)
7. If you terminate an employee for misconduct, the discharge (or suspension pending investigation) should occur immediately. Don't keep an employee on until you can get a replacement because it may show that the violation was not severe enough to warrant misconduct.
8. Document all warnings, and make sure they understand that it is a warning. (Written warnings are preferable.)
9. Fully answer separation statements. Call if you are not sure if something is important.
10. Contact your local Job Service office at any time if you have questions regarding Unemployment Insurance issues.

For more information about this, or future Business Roundtables, contact the Pocatello Job Service office at 235-5420 or e-mail [unemploy27@labor.state.id.us](mailto:unemploy27@labor.state.id.us).

#### **AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS**

*Please note: Information contained in Economic Developments is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce publications, and other sources.*

- In July, Zion's Bank will open a temporary branch office in Pocatello. The new office, located at 5190 Yellowstone, will replace the office currently located inside the old Smith's Food Center on Yellowstone. The food store closed last year. Zion's will begin construction of a permanent facility at the new location, which should be completed by November 2001.
- Work has begun in Pocatello on the Halliday Street Stormwater Improvement Project. The \$4.46 million project should prevent the east-to-west flooding that occurs during heavy rainfall.
- American MicroSystems, Inc. (AMI) in Pocatello reduced its workforce by approximately 220 workers. A slowdown in the economy, especially the semiconductor business, caused the reduction. Despite the reduction, AMI continues to be Pocatello's largest private employer, employing over 1,000 workers.
- R & L Communications opened an office at 862 Washington in Montpelier. The business sells communication products, DIRECTTV satellite systems, and cellular phones.
- Tony Varilone has been hired as the new Economic Development Specialist in Caribou County. Federal funding for the position was acquired through the Economic Development Administration. The City of Soda Springs is providing office space for this effort.
- Astaris, LLC reduced its workforce in Caribou County by nine workers.
- Nyoplast America, a PVC-fittings manufacturing plant in Preston, has been sold to Freedom Plastics. Nyoplast America, a subsidiary of Nyoplast NV in the Netherlands, was sold to allow the company to focus on the European market. The sale did not affect employment at the facility, but future growth, under the ownership of Freedom Plastics, is expected.
- J.R. Simplot Company has begun a \$15 million upgrade at its Don Plant in Power County. Completion of the upgrade is expected by July 2001.
- Astaris, LLC, reduced its workforce at the Power County facility by 91 workers. The company has reduced production of purified phosphorus from four furnaces to one because of the current power shortage.

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# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

A monthly decrease was seen in the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) consisting of Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, and Jefferson counties. May's rate of 3.3 percent is two-tenths of a percentage point lower than the previous month and five-tenths of a percentage point lower than the May 2000 rate. The LMA is 1.5 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 4.8 percent and 1.1 percentage points lower than the national rate of 4.4 percent.

The *Civilian Labor Force* showed an increase of 370 people over the month with the economy holding steady, yet somewhat in limbo, while awaiting lay-offs at the INEEL. An increase in the need for construction workers, garden and building supply workers, and recreation workers, along with the addition of many students during the summer months, has helped the labor force to grow. The yearly growth in the *Civilian Labor Force* was slightly over 3,000 people, with the largest percentage increase (1,940 people) from Bonneville County.

Bonneville County held the lowest unemployment rate in the Bonneville LMA at 3.1 percent in May, followed by Jefferson, Butte, and Bingham counties at 3.3, 3.4, and 3.9 percent, respectively. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, decreased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 3.2 percent and three-tenths of a percentage point from May 2000.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* (a count of jobs by place of work) increased by almost 1,000 over the month, for a total of 63,890 jobs in the LMA. *Goods-Producing Industries* and *Service-Producing Industries* both increased over the month. The largest numerical increase was seen in *Construction (Special Trade)*, adding an additional 340 jobs as building goes into full swing. An increase of 230

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, & Jefferson counties

	May 2001*	Apr 2001	May 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	82,790	82,420	79,540	0.4	4.1
Unemployment	2,760	2,910	3,010	-5.2	-8.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.3%	3.5%	3.8%		
Total Employment	80,020	79,510	76,530	0.6	4.6
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	82,960	81,650	79,630	1.6	4.2
Unemployment	2,300	2,570	2,500	-10.5	-8.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8%	3.1%	3.1%		
Total Employment	80,660	79,080	77,130	2.0	4.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	63,890	62,950	62,570	1.5	2.1
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	9,530	9,160	9,320	4.0	2.3
Mining & Construction	4,330	3,990	4,080	8.5	6.1
Manufacturing	5,200	5,170	5,240	0.6	-0.8
Food Processing	2,660	2,690	2,790	-1.1	-4.7
Ind. & Com. Mach. & Computer Equip.	440	430	540	2.3	-18.5
All Other Manufacturing	2,100	2,050	1,910	2.4	9.9
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	54,360	53,790	53,250	1.1	2.1
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,270	2,220	2,340	2.3	-3.0
Wholesale Trade	6,200	6,170	6,270	0.5	-1.1
Retail Trade	11,500	11,360	11,450	1.2	0.4
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,920	1,910	1,890	0.5	1.6
Services	21,610	21,450	20,660	0.7	4.6
Government Administration	5,460	5,230	5,190	4.4	5.2
Government Education	5,400	5,450	5,450	-0.9	-0.9
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

jobs was seen in *Government Administration* as seasonal facilities open and youth become available for many of these jobs. *Retail Trade* also added 140 jobs, mostly from *Food Stores* and *Building Materials & Garden Supplies*. *Government Education* was the only major industry to experience a loss (50 jobs). *Food Processing* did experience a loss of 30 jobs, but its major industry category, *Manufacturing*, showed an overall increase of 30.

A year-over-year comparison shows that *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 1,320 jobs. *Goods-Producing Industries* increased by 210 with *Construction* being the growth variable (increase of 250 jobs). Overall losses in *Manufacturing* (40 jobs) stemmed from losses in both *Food Processing* and *Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment* and an increase in *All Other Manufacturing*. *Service-Producing Industries* showed an overall increase of 1,110 jobs, with *Services* showing an increase of 950. *Business Services* showed the largest growth at over 200 jobs. *Engineering & Management*, *Health Services (non-hospital)*, and *Social Services* were the other contributing segments. Losses were noted in *Transportation, Communication & Utilities (Communications)*, *Wholesale Trade (Durables)*, and *Government Administration*.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Bonneville County

- CEO and president of Melaleuca, Inc., Frank Vander-sloot, was recently named Entrepreneur of the Year for the Northwest United States. Sponsored by Ernst & Young and so-sponsored by CNN, USA Today, NASDAQ, and the Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, the award honors entrepreneurs who created and sustained successful and growing business ventures. Melaleuca was started in 1985 and uses a consumer direct marketing plan to distribute cleaning, health and beauty products worldwide. Its most recent growth takes it into Australia this fall. Melaleuca also sponsors the Melaleuca Freedom Celebration in Idaho Falls for the Fourth of July, the largest fireworks display West of the Mississippi for 2000. This year was even bigger, as it was Melaleuca's tenth anniversary of giving Eastern Idaho a great show!
- The Trackside Mall opened in June in Idaho Falls. The mall is located on Poulson Street, and will add vendors as each floor is made ready. The first floor is now open and two more will follow, hoping to house 150 to 200 vendors when the whole mall is completed. The mall features antiques, crafts and collectibles. The owners, Joe and Barbara Riggins, have been working on this project since 1999 and have spent \$250,000 for remodeling.
- Idaho Falls is receiving another Subway to bring the number to four in the city. The new building will look like the newest one on Broadway Street and will be run by Bonneville Foods, Inc., the same company that owns the other three in Idaho Falls and one in Pocatello. This new Subway is currently under construction at Channing Way next to Holiday Inn Express.
- Shoup and B Streets will have a new occupant July 10. The old Montgomery Ward building will house the Grand Victorian Wedding Chapel and Reception Parlor. It will cater to all types of weddings and the décor will be Victorian. The chapel is 5,700-square feet and will be operated by Tory and Dave Kirby. Tory has operated a portable wedding service for eight years and has been a wedding consultant for 15 years.
- The Quilted Daisy, a store that sells fabric, supplies, and books to quilters, recently moved to 275 Cliff Street, just down from Mi Casa. The store was previously located on Park Street, but needed more room to expand. Square footage and parking have expanded and classes can now be offered on the main floor. The store is also a Bernina sewing machine dealer.
- The new 30-bed ER renovation at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center is now open. The hospital found that the old ER was not capable of handling the 36,000 visits it received last year in the manner it desired to treat its customers. ER visits are on the rise locally and nationally. The new ER can separate the non-urgent cases with the trauma and true emergency cases, hopefully minimizing the time someone spends in a visit. The hospital treats major trauma cases within a 250-mile radius. Besides increasing the number of beds available, the renovated ER has its own scan and X-ray

machines, a central monitoring system, and a pneumatic tube system to transport lab orders and samples and prescriptions to and from the ER.

### Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, and Madison Counties

- The Riot Zone opened in Rigby (Jefferson County) in mid-June. It offers an 18-hole miniature golf course, go-Kart tracks, pedal cars for two or four riders, and a Buckaroo. The Riot Zone is also working on a covered picnic area to accommodate up to 75 people for reunions or gatherings. It is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to midnight Fridays and Saturdays. It is located on the north end of Rigby just off Highway 20 (going towards Rigby Lake) and can be contacted at 390-3401.
- ML Technologies has announced the opening of a call center in St. Anthony (Fremont County) to go along with its office of human resources, accounting, graphic design, and technical publications in the city. Although the company is based in Idaho Falls, it has offices in St. Anthony, Boise, Salt Lake City, Denver, Washington D.C., and Washington State. The company is a full-service information technology provider and contracts with federal agencies and the private sector. The call center should be functional by September 1 and could employ up to 125 positions within two years. It will be located in the old Ben Franklin store that is being renovated on Bridge Street.
- The High Plains Moto Club opened in Rexburg (Madison County). It is owned by brothers, Travis and Tim Frandsen, who have been racing motorcycles for many years and decided to turn their hobby into something the area could enjoy. The track sits on 10 acres and consists of 10 jumps and three whoop sections. The brothers have already hosted one East Idaho Motorcycle Association (EIMA) race and have the next one scheduled for August 4. Call for details. The track is available to those interested for \$10 a day Monday through Friday after 4 p.m. and Saturday all day. It is encouraged that you call ahead (356-0806) to assure the track is not being groomed; the track could even be open earlier on some weekdays. The location is just south of 1268 South 2000 West (south Rexburg exit, then head west and look to your right).
- Clark, Fremont, Lemhi, and Custer counties received grants for economic development strategists. Clark and Fremont counties will share a \$45,000 grant from the Idaho Department of Commerce, as will Custer and Lemhi counties. The money will be used to hire strategists to work with area leaders and businesses to create business plans, figure and manage budgets, and encourage economic expansion in rural Idaho. The grants come from the \$500,000 awarded by the Idaho Legislature as part of Governor Kempthorne's rural development initiative.

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## IDAHO'S UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

The recent series of highly publicized mill closures, business downsizing, and temporary layoffs in Idaho brings the spotlight on the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. Are more benefits being paid? Are UI claimants receiving benefits for a longer duration than before? What might be the effect on the UI trust fund that finances the benefits? These are some of the questions being asked. Therefore, in an effort to address these questions, some data is presented.

The Unemployment Insurance program is very complicated and cannot be described in detail in this FYI section. However, some of the salient program features are:

- The UI program was established in 1935 as a part of the Social Security system. The primary purposes of the program are to provide temporary financial assistance to the unemployed, maintain the worker's attachment to the labor force, and to provide some measure of economic stability to local communities.
- The federal government sets standards for the program but the individual states have some latitude in specifying whom the program covers, both employers and employees. States also set benefit levels. State programs must conform to the basic standards established by the federal government.
- The program is financed by a tax on most private employers. This money is deposited in a trust fund. The tax is determined by wages paid—up to a certain level for each employee—by the employer and the total amount of money needed to keep the trust fund account adequate to meet periods of high drawdowns. Law establishes a schedule of tax rates and these rates can vary from year-to-year depending upon the trust fund balance, fund costs to a business, and total wages paid by covered employers. The amount paid by an individual employer is also influenced by the employer's experience with UI payments charged against the business.
- To receive UI benefits, a claimant must have received a certain level of wages from covered employers and received them for a certain period of time. These factors are then used to determine the claimant's benefit amount and eligibility duration. There are maximum benefit amounts and duration. Unless the claimant is to be recalled by the employer, he or she must actively search for work with

other employers and document the work search activity.

- Employers are periodically audited to make sure they are paying the appropriate tax. A sample of claimants is audited to make sure they are conforming to program requirements. If irregularities are found, repayment is required from the claimant and penalties and interest can be assessed against the employer.

It also must be kept in mind that Idaho's UI covered employment base has been increasing constantly over recent years. This, in turn, increases the potential for increased UI claims for any reason. Also, many components of Idaho's economy are very seasonal and there are normal ups and downs in UI claims due to this seasonality. The UI payout amounts also increase due to yearly changes in the maximum benefit levels and, because of increasing wage levels, these amounts are not directly comparable from year-to-year.

FYI Chart 1 is a comparison of money paid for UI benefits in the first six months of the calendar year (which starts in October) for 2001 to 2000. The expenditure pattern is roughly the same, but the amounts paid in this fiscal year are higher than for the previous year, especially in the second quarter. The expenditures on this chart reflect only those paid from the Idaho UI trust fund.

Another measure commonly used is weeks compensated. This is a measure of the number of weekly payments made to claimants. FYI Chart 2 depicts the relationship between this year and last year. Again, the trend is roughly the same but there are heightened levels this year. These are Idaho UI trust fund claimants.

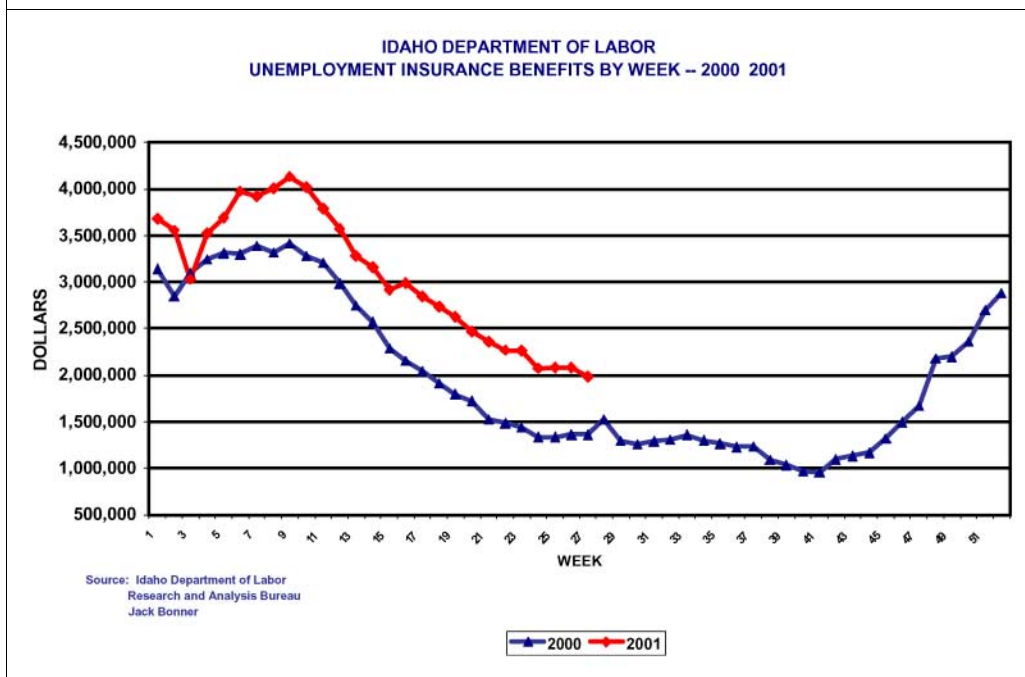
FYI Table 3 provides more detail on the trends noted on the charts. There are three UI programs currently being administered by the Idaho Department of Labor. "Regular" is the program financed by the Idaho UI Trust Fund and is by far the largest of the three programs. "UCFE Regular" is the unemployment compensation program for civilian federal workers and is paid by the federal government. "UCX Regular" is another federally financed program and is for military personnel. Even though these are federal programs, claims activity is reported as a measure of overall UI claims levels and because the Idaho Department of Labor processes the claims.

So, have the recent layoffs had a significant effect on Idaho's UI program? It is hard to draw a conclusion with any certainty. Claims and benefit levels are up, but

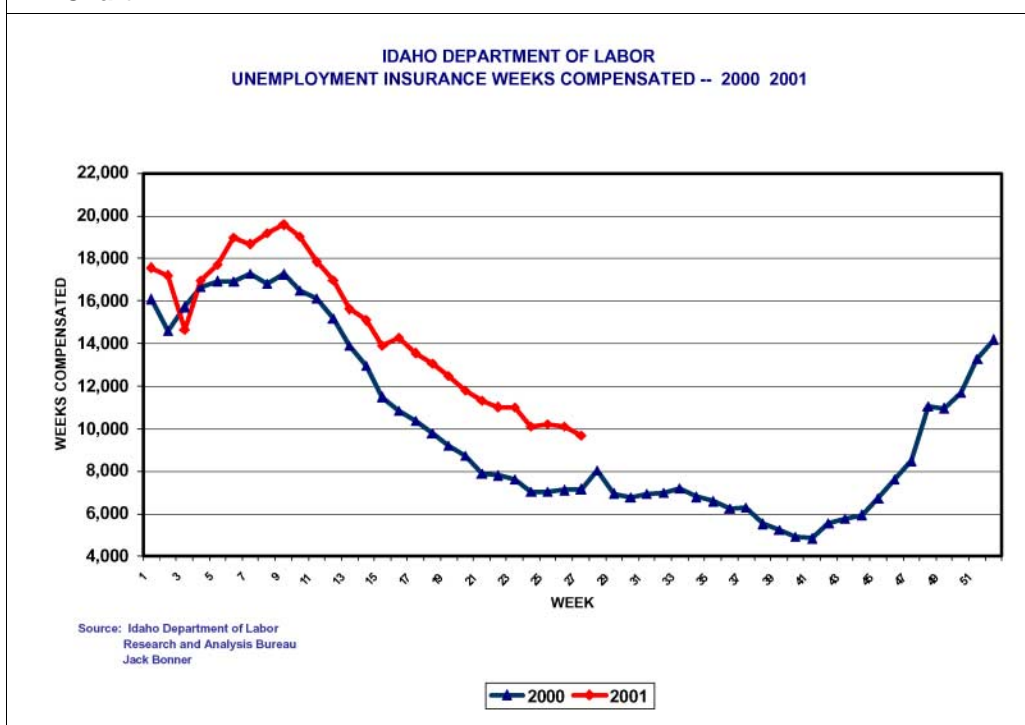
is that due to increased covered employment and increased benefit entitlement amounts? While there are serious problems for claimants who have been laid off, and on several small, rural communities where significant layoffs have occurred, the number laid off is a small percentage of Idaho's labor force. The increased UI activity is being factored in to models of trust fund adequacy to determine if any changes need to be made in Idaho's UI tax and benefit payment system.

Readers interested in the complete details of Idaho's Unemployment Insurance program might want to read Idaho Unemployment Insurance Financing, Benefit Costs and Experience Rating Report published by the Department's Research and Analysis Bureau. It is available in hard copy and can be obtained by calling 208-334-6168. It and other UI data are available on the Internet at <http://www.labor.state.id.us/lmi>.

**FYI Chart 1:**



**FYI Chart 2:**





FYI Table 3: UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TREND DETAIL

ACTIVITY	MAY			JULY YEAR-TO-DATE		
	2001	2000	1999	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999
<b>UI Regular</b>						
Initial Claims	8,207	6,684	6,567	104,407	96,368	101,988
Weeks Compensated	59,159	42,483	40,037	544,053	491,490	518,722
Benefits Paid	\$12,362,808	\$8,274,700	\$7,571,341	\$111,186,777	\$93,989,933	\$96,938,032
Federal \$\$ Paid*	\$87,209	\$56,420	\$49,016	\$1,102,413	\$897,224	\$1,004,511
Average Weekly Payment	\$210.45	\$196.10	\$190.33	\$206.39	\$193.06	\$188.82
<b>UCFE Regular</b>						
Initial Claims	24	20	33	1,160	1,183	1,273
Weeks Compensated	417	386	458	7,897	8,052	8,366
Benefits Paid	\$101,653	\$91,193	\$92,988	\$1,987,786	\$1,948,479	\$1,912,446
Average Weekly Payment	\$243.77	\$236.25	\$203.03	\$251.71	\$241.99	\$228.60
<b>UCX Regular</b>						
Initial Claims	28	31	24	300	381	409
Weeks Compensated	270	267	241	2,617	2,638	3,382
Benefits Paid	\$66,134	\$66,054	\$58,430	\$669,132	\$647,256	\$804,437
Average Weekly Payment	\$244.94	\$247.39	\$242.45	\$255.69	\$245.36	\$237.86

\* UCFE - UCX funds from combination claims included for computing average weekly payment

# Glossary of Labor Market Terms

**Agriculture Employment:** Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

**Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours:** The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Average Weekly Earnings:** Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

**Civilian Labor Force:** A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

**Consumer Price Index (CPI):** A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

**Covered Employers:** Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

**Durable Goods:** Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

**Employed:** Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

**Initial Claim:** Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

**Labor Market Area (LMA):** An area that consists of a central city or cities and the surrounding territory within commuting distance. It is an economically integrated geographic area within which individuals can reside and find

employment without changing place of residence. Idaho has nine LMAs.

**Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA):** An area that has either a city with a population of at least 50,000 or a Bureau of Census urbanized area of at least 50,000 and a total metropolitan area of at least 100,000. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. There are two MSAs in Idaho—Boise City (including Ada and Canyon counties) and Pocatello City (including Bannock County).

**Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment:** Persons on non-farm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

**Nondurable Goods:** Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

**Seasonally Adjusted:** Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

**Unemployed:** Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

**Unemployment Insurance:** Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

**Unemployment Rate:** The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

**Weekly Benefit Amount:** The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

**Weeks Claimed:** The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

**Weeks Compensated:** The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.

# IDAHO EMPLOYMENT

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